

DIGGIN' THE GROOVES
BOB DAVENPORT
(see page 9)

Kunstadt
researches
Kunstadt!
page 3)



THE MAGAZINE OF
RECORD STATISTICS
AND INFORMATION
ISSUE 171/2
MARCH 1980
\$1.00

**record
research**

**Blues
Who's
Who**

ERNEST L. STEVENS



*His Quartet
*His Dance Orch.
*His nom-de-plume
"Felix Falkenburg"
(see page 14)

Modern Eyes-zing
Bob Porter



(see page 11) (Beginning)

****SIGNATURE****
Masters Listing

FRASE - ABRAMS

CORRECTIONS
and
ADDITIONS to:
**THE AMERICAN
DANCE BAND
DISCOGRAPHY
1917-1942**
—VOLUME I
BING ABRAMS TO ARTHUR L. L. BROWN
BRIAN RUST

(see page 23)

**Biographical
Dictionary**

Sheldon Harris

Illustrated.
Book Review
(see p.2)

BLACK PATTI

(see p.4)

part three
"BLACK PATTI"
on the
American
Theatrical
Stage



-Musical Artistry and Longevity-
**** Command Performance ****

-Amazing, Talented
-"BLACK PATTI"-

-Madame Sissieretta Jones-

Her Life! Her Career! Her Times!
and the beautiful, rare
record label named in Her honor!
compiled by
Henry Henriksen

(see page 13)

**Music-KLEE
Speaking!**
Joe Klee

FROM THE OPERA HOUSE No. 2
Once a time.....
AMERICAN STAGE.....



DISCOVERY!

by Roy Evans

THE LADY WITH THE TAP

ELEANOR POWELL
ELEANOR POWELL
ELEANOR POWELL

part one (see page 8)



(see page 12)

RAGGING the CLASSICS
by JOHN SAM LEWIS

"THE BEACHAM CELEBRATION"

DISCOING IN
* GEORGE BLACKER *
OUR
CHAMPION-HIT
man

CHAMPION
15754 to
15875
- HIT (begin)
8000 to
8034

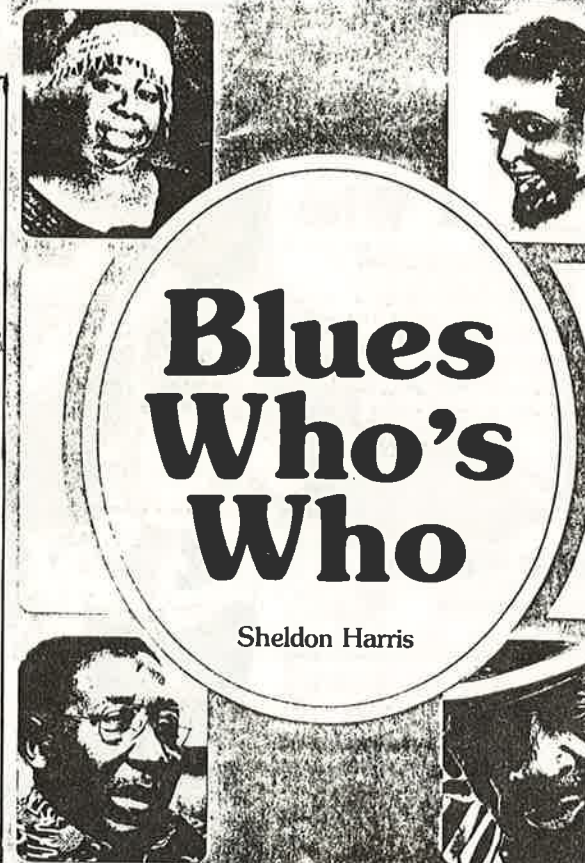


(see page 7)

(see page 10)

Congratulations to the author, **SHELDON HARRIS** and the **ARLINGTON HOUSE** publishers and the legion of music personalities who contributed their histories to Mr. Harris' indefatigable compiling skill in the preparation of this most elaborate biographical dictionary. Their vital statistics not only fostered our truly native American art form, the **BLUES** - but provided the forging ingredients which are so evident in today's world-wide popular music scene. We have reproduced the information from the dust jacket of the volume as they succinctly give you an immediate comprehensible resume of the scope of this great work. We have also reproduced an illustrative sampling from this 775 page book in order to show the researching dexterity of Sheldon Harris. We chose Victoria Spivey's bio, because our Record Research Magazine was indeed privileged to publish more than 40 columns which were penned by this great lady of the Blues who was a RR staff member. For further information on the availability of **"BLUES WHO'S WHO"** you can contact us.

-Len Kunstadt -RR



Blues Who's Who

Sheldon Harris

The basic, truly indispensable blues reference source

- 571 detailed biographies of blues singers
- Over 450 beautiful photographs, many full-page
- Coverage of entire blues field from the beginning to today
- Year-by-year accounting of each singer's credits
- Over 600 pages of solid facts, not prose
- Facts include festivals, concerts, tours, clubs, bands, theater shows, radio and TV shows, films, recordings, songs and much more
- Major awards and citations
- Principle influences

Covers all blues eras and styles from acoustic to electric, rural to city, juke joints to Las Vegas, country to rock, male and female

- Country singers
- Vaudevillians
- Shouters
- Sophisticated cabaret artists
- Folksingers and songsters
- Big-band singers
- Rhythm & Blues swingers
- Dixieland hot mammas
- Chicago stylists
- Rock-blues singers
- Popular modernists
- and hundreds of others

"This remarkable achievement does for the blues what Leonard Feather and John Chilton have previously done for jazz. It provides an excellent map to a vast territory of far more varied geography than is generally realized. Here are the facts on singers and musicians—famous and obscure alike—who have often unknowingly had an enormous influence on twentieth-century music."

—Stanley Dance, jazz and blues critic, historian, and record producer

"The most impressive mass of facts ever published on the blues; an essential guide to the lives and careers of traditional and contemporary blues singers as well as relevant stylists of rock, soul, jazz and folk music."

—Jim O'Neal, Co-Editor/Publisher, *Living Blues Magazine*, Chicago

About the Author:

SHELDON HARRIS was raised and educated in New York City. His interest in blues and jazz began in the 1930s. After attending blues-jazz history/appreciation classes under the direction of the late Dr. Marshall W. Stearns, noted jazz authority, Sheldon served twelve years with Dr. Stearns at the Institute of Jazz Studies in New York as secretary, assisting researchers, writers, fans, and students the world over. From 1963 to 1971, he served as blues editor for *Jazz and Pop Magazine*, a national publication covering the contemporary music scene. During the past twenty-four years, he has lectured on blues at various colleges and universities throughout the U.S. and has participated in several radio blues shows. Sheldon has written an extensive number of blues record album liner notes, has contributed articles to magazines, and has, on occasion, produced recording sessions and live concerts. Nearly eighteen years of research have gone into the compilation of *Blues Who's Who*.



A Biographical Dictionary of Blues Singers

SPIVEY, VICTORIA REGINA "Vicky"
(aka: Jane Lucas)



Born: Oct 15, 1906, Houston (Harris Co), TX
Died: Oct 3, 1976, New York, NY
Inst: Organ/Piano/Ukulele

Father was Grant Spivey who worked in own family string band; mother was Addie Smith, a nurse; one of 8 children; interested in music early learning piano as child and occasionally worked local parties, Houston, TX, during teens; worked as pianist at Lincoln Theater, Dallas, TX, 1918; worked in Lazy Diddy's Fillmore Blues Band/C; Talon's Band & Revue, Dallas, c1918; worked w/ Blind Lemon Jefferson and others in gambling/jay houses/clubs in Galveston/Houston, TX, area, early 20s; rec OKeh label, St. Louis, MO, 1926; rec w/ John Esby/Lennie Johnson/King Oliver/ Clarence Williams/Louis Armstrong/others, OKeh label, NYC, NY/BN Lantis, MO, 1926-9; worked as staff writer for St. Louis Publishing Company, St. Louis, 1927; toured as single working clubs/vaudeville houses from St. Louis to NYC through 20s; worked Club Kentucky, NYC, 1927; app in HIT BITS FROM AFRICANA Revue, Lincoln Theater, NYC, 1927; worked Spider Web, Buffalo, NY, c1928; Metropolitan Theater, Chicago, IL, 1928; app in all-black musical film HALLELUJAH!, 1929; app w/ Dr Eva Jessye

(on unknown) show, local radio, NYC, 1929; rec w/ Henry Allen Orch, Victor label, NYC, 1929; rec duets w/ Porter Grammer, Victor label, NYC, 1930; app w/ Eddie Hunter in revival of 4-11-14 musical comedy, Lafayette Theater, NYC, 1930; toured as director of Lloyd Hunter's Seven-sevens working colleges/dances/pavilions/radiorooms, through Midwest and Southwest, 1930-1; rec Vocalion label, Chicago, 1931; rec w/ Lloyd Hunter's Seven-sevens, Vocalion label, Chicago, 1931; toured w/ Jay Allen band working dances through Midwest, 1931; toured w/ DALLAS TOWN TOPICS Revue working shows through Texas/Oklahoma, 1933; frequently worked as single (or with sisters) in vaudeville houses/burlesque/theaters through mid-30s; toured w/ dancer Billy Adams working Minsky Burlesque circuit and other circuits through US/Canada from 1934; toured w/ Louis Armstrong through US, mid-30s; worked various revues, New Grand Terrace, Chicago, IL, mid-30s; rec Decca label, Chicago, 1936; rec (as "Jane Lucas") Vocalion label, Chicago, 1937; worked Bill Robinson's Mino Professional Club, NYC, c1938; app in musical revue HELZAPOPPIN, RKO Palace/46th Street Theater, Winter Garden Theater, NYC, 1938-9; then toured with show; worked Abe & Pappy Club, Dallas, TX, 1940; toured one-nighters w/ Billy Adams working Mike DeLisa Club, Chicago, IL/The Palladium, Cleveland, OH/Normandy Club, Cleveland/others across US, through 40s; briefly owned own club, East St. Louis, IL, mid-40s; worked Small's Paradise, NYC, 1948; Apollo Theater, NYC, late 40s; app on local radio shows, NYC, early 50s; frequently worked Central Plaza/Stuyvesant Casino/Mayfair Lounge/other jazz spots, NYC, from early 50s; worked mostly in church affairs, NYC area, mid to late 50s; worked Jimmy Ryan's Club/Cinderella Club/Nick's, East Orange, NJ, 1960; w/ Don Lambert, Wallace's Lounge, East Orange, NJ, 1960; w/ Lennie Johnson, Gerde's Folk City, NYC, 1961; formed/led Queen Vee label, NYC, 1961; rec w/ Buster Bailey/Lennie Johnson/others, Bluesville label, NYC, 1961; app on MUSIC USA, Voice of America-radio, 1961; rec Folkways label, NYC, 1962; app on BOB MAXWELL Show, CBS-radio, 1962; worked Jimmy Ryan's, NYC, 1962; Eddie Caudon's, NYC, 1962; Cinderella Club, NYC, 1962; Central Plaza, NYC, 1962; formed own jazz/blues label, Spivey Record Company, Brooklyn, NY, 1962 (and frequently rec with many blues performers to 1976); worked Carnegie Hall, NYC, 1962; app w/ Bitch, Gogo/Wilho B Thomas, LYRICS AND LEGENDS (ep: The Blues), WNET-TV, NYC (syndicated), 1963; toured w/ American Folk-Blues Festival working concert dates through England/Europe, 1963 (per shown on I HEAR THE BLUES, Granada-TV, England); rec w/ Sunny Boy Williamson (Alex Miller), Spivey label, Baden-Baden, Ger, 1963; rec Fontana label, Bremen, Ger, 1963; contributed articles to *Record Research/Sounds & Fury* magazines, 1963-6; worked Celebrity Club, NYC, NY, 1964; Blues Alley Club, Washington, DC, 1965; Summer Arts Festival, Sterling Forest, Tuxedo Park, NY, 1965; rec w/ Easy Rider Jazz Band, GHB label, Connecticut, 1966; worked Hall Note, NYC, 1969; Chicago Blues Festival, Chicago, 1969; w/ Turk Murphy Band/Woody Allen, Earthquake McGoon's, San Francisco, CA, 1970; app on local TV/radio shows, San Francisco, 1970; app on FREE TIME, PBS-TV, 1971; worked Univ of Pittsburgh Blues Festival, Pittsburgh, PA, 1971; frequently toured college circuit working concert dates, 1971-4; rec instructional cassettes for Conn Instrument Company of Chicago (and served as blues advisor), 1971; active in recording young talent (like Danny Russo/Ralph Rush/Ted Stiles/Sugar Blue/Mark Ross/others), Spivey label, NYC area, from early 70s; worked Ann Arbor Blues Festival, Ann Arbor, MI, 1973; Philadelphia Folk Festival, Schwenksville, PA, 1973-4 (per 1974 concert shown PHILADELPHIA FOLK FESTIVAL, PBS-TV); Univ of Maine, Orono, ME, 1974; Upsala College, East Orange, NJ, 1974; New York Jazz Museum concert, NYC, 1974; Rutgers Institute of Jazz Studies concert, New Brunswick, NJ, 1974; app on local TV show, Paris, France, 1974; worked Chelsea House Cafe, Briteboro, VT, 1975 (per rel Spivey label); w/ Dickey-Ross Band, Max's Kansas City, NYC, 1976; The Fugee, NYC, 1976; Dr Generosity, NYC, 1976; Fugee, Culcheshone, NYC, 1976; app on THE DIV-H'S MUSIC-A HISTORY OF THE BLUES (ep: Crazy Blues), BBC-1-TV, England, 1976; entered Beckman-Downtown Hospital where she died of internal hemorrhage; buried Greenfield Cemetery, Hempstead, NY; clip shown in ROOTS OF COUNTRY MUSIC & BLUES, KGO-TV, San Francisco, 1977

Personal: Married Reuben Floyd (c1928-early 30s); manager, "Bitch" Adams (c1934-) who later served as manager, 1977; Married 2 other times. Her sisters Addie "Sweet Poo" Spivey/Ellan "Za-Zu" Spivey/Lenna Spivey were singers

Billings: The Queen/Queen of the Blues

Songs: A Big One/A Bum Can't Do You No Good/The Alligator Pond Went Dry/Arkansas Road Blues/Beau-

High-Class Records.

THE COLUMBIA PHONOGRAPH COMPANY

Desires to call particular attention to a new series of High-Class Records, which will include classical selections of vocal and instrumental music and talking records by artists of reputation. We now have ready solos and duets in German by Mia Werber and Sigmund Kunstadt. In these reproductions, Fraulein Werber's pure soprano tones are heard to great advantage, and all the wonderful sympathy of Herr Kunstadt's voice is faithfully preserved. We also have several violin solos by J. Kocian, the celebrated virtuoso. The new series of High-Class Records is particularly suitable for Graphophone reproductions and the beautiful singing quality of Mr. Kocian's records is characteristic. The French songs by Maurice Declery, of the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, are fine examples of artistic interpretation and show the results of long operatic training. Roberto Vanni, in his Italian songs, appeals to lovers of the old school who appreciate melodic ornamentation, and his clear tenor voice is reproduced with scrupulous fidelity.

The Talking Records include reproductions of some of the lines in Rip Van Winkle, by Mr. Joseph Jefferson, senior. The humorous scene in the mountains, where Rip encounters one of Heinrich Hudson's men is contrasted with the pathetic meeting with his daughter after twenty years' absence. These records, aside from their dramatic merit are valuable as souvenirs of this great actor.

SOPRANO AND TENOR DUETS.

(Sung in German)

By Mia Werber and Sigmund Kunstadt.

1475 Damen Duett, "Susse Madel"—Reinhardt

1480 Der Lustige Ehemann—Otto Jul Bierbaum

Len Kunstadt researches
Sigmund Kunstadt *****

Nearly 8-decades ago one of my relatives recorded for COLUMBIA RECORDS. In RR153/4 (Apr.'78) I requested his recordings or those in duet with MIA WERBER. An astute subscriber had one of the duets which I successfully negotiated for. I also found an old ca. Nov. 1903 4 page sup - and I utilized the portions that were of Kunstadt interest! Now, I'm not only seeking more of his romantic lieder warblings (the guy was pretty good!) but info on his background. I have some memories from my elders many years ago that he was sponsored by a rich Pittsburgh steel tycoon - however this could be supposition. To trace one's lineage back to 1903 with success, especially if Sigmund and Mia may have "rubbed musical shoulders" with actor, Joseph Jefferson and violinist, J. Kocian, would give me a case of ego intoxication....LK

LENOR SOLOS.
(Sung in German)
By Sigmund Kunstadt.
1475 Waltzied from "Das Susse Madel"
"Es war einmal" aus der Operette "Im Reiche Des India"—Paul Lincke
1476 Loblied der Polin aus der Operette "Der Betelstudent"—C. Millock
1473 Walzerlied Sei gepriesen du Lausliche Nacht, aus der Operette "Die Landstreicher"—Zilhrer



FROM record research

THE MAGAZINE OF RECORD INFORMATION & STATISTICS
65 GRAND AVENUE, BROOKLYN, N. Y., 11205

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THE MAGAZINE OF RECORD INFORMATION & STATISTICS
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BLACK PATTI

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by Henry Henriksen

by Henry Henriksen

CHAPTER THREE

"BLACK PATTI" on the American Theatrical Stage

When she returned from her European tour Mme. Sissieretta Jones knew the barrier confronting her aspirations for the operatic stage, especially the Metropolitan. There were the insulting myths about the Negro as being shiftless, immoral, a black beast, dirty, and a criminal - with the press mocking his speech and exaggerating his crimes. Ridiculing the Negro was a popular past time! These attitudes to her race forced her to limit her repertory and turn from the concert to the theatrical in musical entertainment. Using her assigned name Black Patti, and with Voelckel and Nolan as managers, she became part of a theatrical group, THE BLACK PATTI TROUBADOURS, a company which she headed for 20 years. Mme. Jones and her Troubadours penetrated the urban and regional sections of America performing a minstrel and comedy format with a finale of an operatic kaleidoscope. Many a famous black entertainer either began or enhanced their career in the company of The Black Patti Troubadours. *****The PRESS began to write about her theatrical troubadours.....

-The New York Clipper reported: THE TROUBADOURS HAD SUCCESS IN THEIR FIRST ENGAGEMENT at Proctor's Palace, June 13, 1896.(1)

-The New York Dramatic Mirror of Jan. 2, 1897 announced the Black Patti Troubadours were to perform at Indianapolis Indiana and Columbus Ohio.(1)

-The Argonaut of San Francisco of Feb. 14, 1898 reported the following:

"About the middle of February 1898, Mme. Sissieretta Jones, heralded as 'Black Patti,' appeared at the California Theatre with her Colored Troubadours. An Argonaut critic (Feb. 14, 1898) described their performance 'a distinctly novel one, not like that of a regular minstrel troupe and approaching somewhat the lines of a farce-comedy.' These last two phrases significantly emphasized the irony and futility contained in statements of Rice, Shepard, Haverly and a few others who had contended that minstrel shows would not give way before the encroachments of a new form of comedy. Quite substantial proof of these die-hards' error could be found in Mme. Jones' 'method for presenting the minstrels'. It did not make her a millionaire; on the contrary it further demonstrated the inevitable degeneration of minstrelsy and the efforts of its practitioners to infuse it with new life by borrowing from rival elements' in the theatre.

The Black troubadours were minstrels by virtue of their make-up and by the inclusion of an olio in a performance otherwise alien to the minstrel tradition. There appeared nothing startling in their opening sketch, at Gay Cooney Island. It was a piece without semblance of plot, composed mostly of vaudeville specialty acts, songs and dances. During the olio Ernest Hogan sang several amusing songs, among which "All Coons Look Alike to Me," one of his own compositions, and "Honey, You've made a Hit with Me" which were most popular. The olio concluded with a cakewalk in which the whole troupe participated. In place of the orthodox second part, Mme. Jones deluged her audience with opera, "ranging from Sextet from Lucia to Ave Maria, and Intermezzo from Cavalleria Rusticana."(2)

-Article published by The Colored American of July 9, 1898.

9 July 1898,
The Colored American
(Washington, D.C.)

Mme. Sissieretta Jones (Black Patti) is in great demand for special summer engagements, but she is loath to abandon her plans for perfect rest during the heated term. She will open her third starring season in September at the head of the Black Patti's Troubadours, under the management of Voelckel and Nolan. Mme. Jones commands the handsome salary of \$500 per week, and is one of the best drawing cards on the road.

This program was highly successful in Seattle, also in St. Paul and Minneapolis Minnesota and the Canada Opera House in Toronto.

The farce "A Filipino Misfit" was presented between 1898 to 1902. In this new play more stress was made for more purpose and progression, and the basic comical quality was still a focus around which all other forces rotated.

As the new century appeared humor changed; the rowdy and uncouth humor was displaced by an artificial and refined humor.

Mme. Jones Troubadours were original by renewed skits each season which introduced the new coon-song and ragtime along with the operatic air. At a presentation of "At Jolly Coon-ey Island" in Seattle, Washington by the Troubadours in 1898 Mme. Jones sang "The Enchantress". There was also a minstrel format and an operatic kaleidoscope with final singing by Mme. Jones of selections from Cavalleria Rusticana, Faust, Il Trovatore and Lucia di Lammermoor.

-The Colored American of Washington D.C. gives a description of the Troubadours at the Grand Opera House: (3)

14 May 1898,
The Colored American
(Washington, D.C.)

BLACK PATTI'S TROUBADOURS

Black Patti (Mme. Sissieretta Jones), who for several years past has won the highest lyric honors on the concert stage, and who is endowed with a marvelous voice, sweet in quality and of extensive range, has abandoned the concert stage in favor of comedy, vaudeville and opera. This great singer is the star of "The Black Patti's Troubadours," an organization comprising fifty celebrated artists and which is said to be the most imposing aggregation of colored performers ever organized. The stage entertainment offered by this company is attractive, sensational and novel. It embraces comedy, burlesque, ballad, vaudeville and opera presented with appropriate scenery, elegant and costly costumes and all the necessary stage surroundings requisite for a perfect and artistic performance.

"At Jolly Cooney Island" is the title of a merry and laugh-provoking skit which serves as a curtain raiser and vehicle to give free rein to the company's comedy and singing forces. This travesty is followed by a great vaudeville olio and selections from the various standard grand and comic operas. In the operatic olio Black Patti has great opportunities to display her wonderful voice. She sustains the principal roles of *The Grand Duchess*, *Carmen*, *Bohemia Girl*, *Trovatore*, *Lucia*, *Mari-tana*, *Tar and Tar*, and *The Daughter of the Regiment*. The rendition which she and the entire company give of this repertorial opera selections is said to be incomparably grand. Not only is the solo singing of the highest order, but the choruses are rendered with a spirit and musical finish which never fail to excite genuine enthusiasm. The work of Black Patti and the company has received the highest marks of public approval, and the forthcoming performances here will doubtless be highly appreciated. The Troubadours will be at the Grand Opera House for one week, beginning Monday evening, May 16.

-Notice of Troubadours preparing for the Paris Exposition: (4)

20 May 1899,
The Colored American

"Black Patti" and her Troubadours will go to the Paris Exposition. They are already brushing up on their "patte vous Français," preparatory toward invading the land of the Napoleons and grape juice.

-The Detroit Free Press, Sept. 25, 1899. Says: The Troubadours opened with a "Rag-time Frolic at Ras-bury Park." The skit was followed by an olio, the final was the operatic featuring Mme. Jones in selections from *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Chimes of Normandy*, *Faust* and *Tannhauser* etc. Such an improved program was recognized by its artistic competency, by its unified form with a beginning, a middle and an end.(5)

-The Troubadour performance at St. John, New Brunswick was described by the Evening Mail Sept. 11, 1900:(6)

"The program began with a very funny ragtime comedy skit called a Darktown Frolic on the Rialto....and the specialties were of the very best and immensely pleasing."

(1) New York Clipper (6-13-96) and New York Dramatic Mirror (1-2-97)

(2) San Francisco Theatre Research - WPA Project Artists and Writers Vol.13(Courtesy of Minneapolis Athenaeum) -1939

(3) The Colored American (May 14, 1898)

(4) Ibid (May 20, 1899)

(5) Detroit Free Press-Sept. 25, 1899

(6) Evening Mail-New Brunswick (St. John) -Sept.11,1900

-Patti's Troubadours in the Mid-West at the Grand Theatre St. Paul, Minn.(7)

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1901.
ST. PAUL DISPATCH.

BLACK
PATTI and
Company
at the
Grand

BLACK PATTI AND COMPANY.

An Attractive Aggregation for the Grand the Coming Week.

After an absence of two years, there is announced for a visit to the Grand the coming week, commencing tomorrow night, the famous organization, Black Patti Troubadours. During the past six years they have fairly carried the country by storm through their plantation melodies, merry jinks, characteristic dances, glistening cakewalks and superb operatic one-act singings.

Every year they bring out new faces and new features, and it is said that their offerings for this season far exceed all previous ones. The personnel of the company comprises two senior or more, including the most talented stage artists known among the Afro-American race.

Black Patti (Mme. Sissieretta Jones), whom nature has endowed with a marvelous voice, is the stellar attraction, and John Rucker, the "Alabama Blossom," the best of all colored singers and funniest colored comedian, are in the cast.

Among the other prominent specialty performers are the Negro vocal wonderer, Mack Allen, a black-wire phenomenon, the Stokes trio of jukingany dancers and singers, James C. Boyd, the "longest recentist," Mattie Phillips, the "undisputed sobriest," and champion cakewalker of the world, Laura Bailey, the Charleston Queen, Sarah Davis, the Alabama nightingale, James Lightfoot, the wonderful baritone, Anthony Bird, the Black Edward de Ross, James V. Reed, the famous profunder, the famous Troubadour quartette, the can-can and the smart back dancing and cakewalk contingent.

The stage scheme is new this season. "A Filipino Misfit" is the title of the new opening skit. Here is where hilarity and song, black dance and cakewalk reign supreme.

A very strong olio follows, including specialties, and Black Patti in a new section of classic ballads and sweet melodies of the Sunny South.

A special feature of the performance in this city will be a cakewalk contest, open to all couples, for gold medal prizes.

Commenting on a performance of Mme. Jones Troubadours, it states that, "there was a fine audience of both white and colored people the latter taking the upper portion of the house."(8)

-On November 13, 1903, The New Orleans Times-Democrat cited a letter as follows:

"A theatrical performance presented by Negroes in a white theatre before a white or a mixed audience is utterly and hopelessly reprehensible. At this particular period, when President Roosevelt's ill-considered attitude to the Negro has forced the South to accentuate the color line, and resent any attempt to trespass upon social ground which it defines such a performance becomes an ethical offense:(9)

The "ill considered attitude" by President Roosevelt was shown by a dinner invitation to Dr. Booker T. Washington, a Negro educator and American citizen. The group attacked was a troupe, managed by Klaw and Erlanger "Smart Set," a group of all-Negro cast of international reputation; comedians make their white brothers look like cheap performers, and a chorus of dark-skinned beauties who in the ensemble are singularly beautiful to look upon. The writer of the letter to Times-Democrat further appealed to the white patrons and asked them to boycott the performance of "Smart Set" since such show should be restricted to Negro theaters, for the practice of offering them to the white public is pernicious and not be permitted to obtain.(10)

Treatment of this type of all-Negro troupes and the Negro section of the audiences attending performances was not confined to the South but became the standard (with gradations) all over the country.(11)

Musical comedy was molded into a unified whole from 1903 to 1910. In Dahomey, such a musical-comedy aroused Broadway in 1903 was presented by Williams and Walker Company before the King and Queen and a host of diplomatic dignitaries in England's Palace Gardens.(12)

Mme. Jones Troubadours was discussed by the Atlanta Constitution because of its refined, darky humor by John Rucker, the Alabama Blossom, and a score of funsters.(13)

The Troubadours in the Far West in 1904.(14)

Black Patti Troubadours at the California Theatre 1904 Period

In 1904 Edward Ackermann assumed the management of the California. Opening the January season was Black Patti, who enjoyed such popularity some seasons before. Interesting is the Evening Post's comment about her of January 6th:

"Not only has she appeared before more royal potentates than any other prima donna, but she enjoys the unique distinction of having appeared at more consecutive performances than any living singer. From August 10, 1896, to the present time she has sung 2,408 times, and during that period has only missed one matinee...She is a woman of magnificent physique."



BLACK PATTI

The Head of the Company at the Grand.

Black Patti and her dusky troubadours at the California Theatre take one back to the brightest days of the old South when buck and wing dances and plaintive Negro melodies supplied the favorite plantation pastimes. The atmosphere of the South is here. Now and then a capital Negro dancer crosses the local stage, but it is rare that a whole troupe of double-jointed, supple, lightning-motioned darkies ever did the breakdown...Mme. Sissieretta Jones, or Black Patti, has a wonderful voice, best in the simple melodies of the South, yet equal to difficult selections from the grand opera...Her singing in "Rose's Honeymoon" and in the finale "Queen's Lace Handkerchief" was charming. Yet one might wish for more of the simple melody and less of the operatic, for in her own field Black Patti would be hard to equal."

During the year 1907 The Troubadours were billed at the Bijou in Minneapolis on April 21st at Blarneys in Pittsburgh May 3rd and at the Empire, in Pittsburgh in May, at the Majestic in Fort Wayne on May 5th, and Los Angeles on February 11th.(15)

In 1909 The Negro audience became strong and it demanded reformed production (as for example a production founded on and which conformed to the age reflecting new strides by the black man in America).

Another transition developed by the affiliation of Bert Williams with the Follies, of the new Harlem emphasis on the comedy, Shakespearean revival, and plays on Negro life. In these transitional shows in 1908, Cole and Johnson presented "The Red Moon", a Negro and American Indian theme. Freeman (Indianapolis, Nov. 29, 1908) describes this show as follows: "The 'Red Moon' is founded on the old superstitions of both races that furnish the characters of the comedy. The red moon is an omen of bad luck with the old-fashioned Negro, and when the moon shines red, to the Indian it is the Great Spirits call for them to follow the war-path.

The play is centered around the life of a Negro-Indian half-breed girl, a ragtime pianist, and a shabby-genteel coon show manager.(16) Rosamond Johnson composed the music for this show and featured Abbie Mitchell."

"Mr. Lode of Coal", the monologue, was presented in 1909 starring Bert Williams and George Walker.(17) Defender Chicago, Oct. 1, 1909

-The show "Prince Bungaboo" was still playing in 1908 and the "Blackville Stroller", written by Tutt Whitney, was a new show in production.

-Work pioneered by the Troubadours reached its highest point in the Williams and Walker production "Bandanna Land" in 1908-1909.

"A trip to Africa" was presented in 1910 with favorable reviews by Columbus Dispatch, Boston Transcript.(18) In 1911 a skit entitled "In the Jungles" was given creditable reviews by the Cincinnati Commercial and Louisville Herald in August and September.(19)

More on Black Patti

"There is probably no colored singer of the present day as well known to the American public as is the dusky warbler, who has made several tours of the world and has created a furor in many regions by reason of her wonderful accomplishments:(20) May 18, 1912.

"Captain Jasper", the skit interpreted by the Troubadours, was greeted with enthusiasm by the Indianapolis Star and Louisville Times, New York Age and Fort Worth Star Telegram. The New York Age stated that the Troubadours were in their seventeenth year on the stage with a record as "one which no other performers in this country would boast." Patti's company always had a long season, usually opening in August and closing in May. -year after year touring the South, Southwest, Middle West, West and North. (21)

Madame Jones' manager, Mr. Voelckel, announced the company would continue an 18th season. They had support from Negroes and whites and their format had changed to meet the entertainment demands of the time.

"Lucky Sam from Alabama" was announced as "The colored song-bird is seen with her own comedy company in a musical attraction". Mme. Jones became a part of the cast for the play, hence the operatic kaleidoscope" was no longer needed and it does not appear on this three act play of 1914-15 program.

(7) St. Paul Dispatch-Oct. 19, 1901

(8) State (Columbia, So. Carolina) 1901

(9) New Orleans Times Democrat 11-13-1903

(10) New Orleans Times-Democrat 11-13-1903

(11) New York Herald-2-21-1903

(12) New York Sun-(The Negro on the Stage)

(13) Atlanta Constitution

(14) (San Francisco Theatre Research 1904) from Minneapolis Athenaeum

(15) Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette May 5, 1907

(16) Freeman, Indianapolis (11-29-1908)

(17) Defender Chicago-10-1-1909

(18) Columbus Dispatch-Boston Transcript (1910)

(19) Cincinnati Commercial & Louisville Herald. (1911)

(20) Dramatic Mirror (5-18-1912)

(21) New York Age (5-31-1913)

(continued on page 24)



Catalogue number and title

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15771 GE 15171 Angels in Heaven Know I Love
GE 15169 You Will the Angels Play Their
GE 15169 Harp for Me?

15772 GE 14943 The Cat's Got the Yeasles and
GE 14940 The Dog's Got the Hoopla! (Walter Smith)

15773 GE 14932A Keep Building On
GE 14941 Where We'll Never Grow Old

15774 GE 15180A Grosdim Beale Street
GE 15181 Memphis Rhythm

15775 GE 15116 I Ain't Ruttin' Out Nothin'
GE 15115 Blues

15776 GE 14998 Texas Wild Cat Chase
GE 14998B Sunrise on the Farm

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GE 2271 Used to You

15778 GE 2265 The Rainbow Man
GE 2274 Now I'm in Love

15779 GE 2274 Believe It or Not
GE 2275 I'll Always Be in Love with
GE 2275 You

15780 GE 15241A Birmingham Barba
GE 2259B As I Blue

15781 GE 2279A Don't Bang Your Dreams on a
GE 2280A Rainbow

15782 GE 15274A Little Red
GE 15278 I'm in Seventh Heaven

15783 GE 15273A Sleepy Valley
GE 15278B Miss You

15784 GE 2269B When My Dreams Come True
GE 2269B Lonely Little Cinderella

15785 GE 15241A Be Good to Your Mother
GE 15242A My River of Dreams

15786 GE 1490A A Perfect Day
GE 1403A Jumbie

15787 GE 15172 Let That Mile Go 'Auntie Auntie!
GE 15153A Happy Days Long Ago

15788 GE 14918 The Devil in Georgia
GE 14920 Dear Moll

15789 GE 15191A Son of a Gun
GE 15189A Elson's Man

15790 GE 15504A Virginia Bootleggers
GE 15502A Little Sweetheart Pal of Mine

15791 GE 15716 Over the Hills to the Poor
GE 15718 The Grand Roundup

15835 GE 14958A Everybody Likes That Thing
GE 14978A It's Just All Right

15836 GE 15505A We Don't Mean No Harm
GE 15506A You Got Another Thought Com-

15837 GE 14711 Railroad Blues
GE 14899 Medley of Blues (Intro.)

15838 GE 2376A Clonking
GE 2375 I Gotta Have You

15839 GE 2389A When the Real Thing Comes
GE 2387B Miss Wonderful

15840 GE 15705A Escalade
GE 2374A Scotchie

15841 GE 2369A Steppin' Along
GE 2368B Too Wonderful for Words

15842 GE 2372A Hang On to Me
GE 2388A Somebody Nighty Like You

15843 GE 2310A I'm Missing the Long Way Home
GE 2377A If I Were You, I'd Fall in

15844 GE 15725A Things is Hard Most are Hard
GE 15725B My Man's Gonna to the Country

15845 GE 2395A If I Had a Talking Picture of Irving Kaufman
GE 2395B Sweetheart, We Need Each Other

15846 GE 15726B If I Can't Have You
GE 15727 Someone

15847 GE 2378A Love Me
GE 2394A Selling Irish Eyes

15848 GE 2481 Let's Go! In the Mountains
GE 2482 Railroad Boogie

15849 GE 2384A Shut the Door, They're Comin' in
GE 2383A Oh What a Pal was 'Whoozie's'

15850 GE 15785A Old Virginia Moon
GE 15787 On the Beach at Malibu

15851 GE 15734A My Little Home in Tennessee
GE 15735A My Little Home in Tennessee

15852 GE 15782A In the Jail House Now
GE 15782A Frankie and Johnny

15853 GE 15329 California Blues
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GE 15323 On the Boulevard

15855 GE 15323 The Virginia Mambo
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GE 15324A Pork Chop Stomp

15797 GE 2305A For Someone I Love
GE 2305A The Moonlight March

15798 GE 2283B Gotta Feeling for You
GE 2283A Lisa

15799 GE 2300 In My Indiana Home
GE 2299 Free Blue Man

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GE 2304A Miss You

15801 GE 15433A Just a Little Glimpse of Par-
GE 15432A If You Like Me (Mike I Like You) (Do.)

15802 GE 2339A I Lift Up My Finger and I Say
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15803 GE 2339A I Lift Up My Finger and I Say
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15805 GE 15126 Longing for Home
GE 15127 Your Mother's

15806 GE 2314A My Song of the Hills
GE 2305 Junior

15807 GE 2327 Last Night, Honey
GE 2329A It's Wonderfuls Now

15808 GE 15123 Born in Hard Luck
GE 15122A The Talkin' Blues

15809 GE 15194A The Virginia Reel
GE 15195 Do. - Pt. 4

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GE 15317 Don't Grudge Your Mother

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GE 15334A My Old Pal

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DISCOVERY!

by Roy Evans

THE LADY WITH THE TAP ** ELEANOR POWELL **

Hollywood of the 1930's and '40's was a wealth of beautiful girls. Some of them even had talent. Rarely, in the history of modern popular entertainment, did there appear a girl who was as beautiful, talented, and exciting a performer as Eleanor Powell. In a career of some fourteen movies, she delighted many with her incredible dancing skills. She bears the distinction of being one of the few stellar performers in the field of dance to have recorded as both a singer and a dancer!

At the insistence of her mother, she was sent to dancing school to overcome shyness. Many mothers before and since have used this idea to overcome a child's timidity. Few mothers, I daresay, met with the success that Mrs. Powell did.

"Scene, the Cotton Club on 49th Street and Broadway. Time, the wee hours of a Sunday night-Monday morning party for show folks... On hand for the ad lib entertainment are such luminaries as Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway and "Snake Hips" Tucker. In the spotlight at the moment is Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, killing the customers with his patter and his stair dance.

As the number ends, the undisputed King of Tap Dance steps to the footlights and summons from the audience a leggy teen-ager whom he crowns--with, appropriately, a top hat--the Queen of Tap Dance. And off they go into an impromptu duet. The happy young hooper is named Eleanor Powell." (The preceding quote is from "Dance Magazine" August 1961)

Around the same time, Miss Powell appeared at Carnegie Hall with Paul Whiteman's Orchestra in Maurice Chevalier's American Stage Debut. This, by all accounts, must have been an interesting evening indeed judging from the popularity of the performers with whom Miss Powell shared the spotlight.

Miss Powell had already had her first taste of success in a show on Broadway called "The Co-Optimists". This rather short-lived show (24 performances) opened at the Casino de Paris with an all British cast (with the exception of Miss Powell). Apparently the show was some sort of take off on an earlier Broadway success "The Optimists". January of the following year (1929) found her once more on the Great White Way in "Follow Through" a very profitable show (403 performances) which had a very popular score by Ray Henderson with lyrics by the other two-thirds of that well known trio namely Buddy DeSylva and Lew Brown. Tunes from this show included "You Wouldn't Fool Me, Would You?", "I Want to Be Bad", and the well known standard "Button Up Your Overcoat". Apparently, this show kept our young dancer more than busy for the year. This was followed early the following year with her Cotton Club performance and the Carnegie Hall appearance.

As far as billing was concerned, the Powell name gradually eased its way up the list with much hard work and by virtue of a lot of talent. The climb was slow, but steady. Fame and fortune had not really made themselves permanent residents yet in the modest household shared by Mrs. Powell and her daughter. It was not uncommon for young Eleanor to come home from a performance and help her mother with the dishes. Mrs. Powell encouraged her daughter and and proved a strong guiding force for the blossoming young dancer.

Miss Powell's next stage appearance was in "Fine and Dandy" (starring Joe Cook) which experienced a rather lucrative run of 255 performances. It included several fine tunes by Kay Swift including the title song "Fine and Dandy" and another tune called "Can This Be Love?". This was followed a year and a half later by "Hot-Cha" at the Ziegfeld Theater. By now, the young lady from Springfield, Mass. had found her second home on the stage. She frequently traveled by train (in costume!) from the Powell home in Westchester to arrive in New York City in time for the curtain. By now, young Eleanor was really beginning to gain the recognition for which she worked so hard. Financially, things were starting to ease up somewhat, although it was only the beginning as far as the hard work was concerned. "Hot-Cha" lasted 129 performances. It must have seemed that the worst of the Depression was over when this show was followed closely by "George White's Music Hall Varieties" in November of 1932. Miss Powell was now sharing top billing with stars such as Bert Lahr, Harry Richman, and Lily Damita. Despite the fact that the show contained the music of such big names as Harold Arlen, Herman Hupfeld, Cliff Friend, and Carmen Lombardo, it only lasted 72 performances. Four years earlier, Eleanor Powell was crowned "World's Greatest Female Tap Dancer" by the Dance Masters of America. The American public was just beginning to realize why.

Hollywood beckoned and Eleanor Powell found a little of her old shyness coming back. She had been signed by Fox to do her first movie. "George White's Scandals of 1935". Needless to say, she wasn't quite sure how she felt or how she would do. There is a certain distance on Broadway that is not there in Hollywood. The camera sees all and tells all in "larger than life" fashion. Miss Powell's attractiveness and charm would be much more apparent on the screen.

Eleanor Powell



This, in addition to her already well known talents as a dancer, would make her a much more valuable screen talent. She arrived on the set and waited what must have seemed endless hours for her turn to perform. Her call came. She was told to report to makeup. Shyly, she waited on a long line to be made up. What she didn't know was that Fox was shooting an Egyptian epic at the same time. By the time she arrived on the set to commence shooting her number, she looked more like a Nubian slave girl than a tap dancer in a George White picture. Later that year when MGM was casting "Broadway Melody of 1936", a clip from the Fox picture was looked at by MGM execs. Her dancing talents were unmistakable, but producers didn't really think they could suitable use "that colored girl, Eleanor Powell" in "Broadway Melody"! Fortunately, someone cleared up the error and the long and happy association with MGM began. "Scandals" was a sequel picture to an earlier Fox venture of the same name. Apparently, Fox was already losing the musical battle to MGM, so Miss Powell's talents were no longer of use to them (happily for MGM who starred her to much greater advantage).

In mid-1935, MGM decided to star Eleanor Powell in "Broadway Melody of 1936" opposite Robert Taylor (a very much up and coming "juvenile" actor), with support from Jack Benny, Frances Langford, Vilma and Buddy Ebsen (I believe Miss Ebsen's only screen appearance), Una Merkel, and Sid Silvers. The picture was intended to cash in on MGM's initial success in the musical field with "Broadway Melody" (1929). The sequel proved so popular that the idea was repeated with "Broadway Melody of 1938" and "Broadway Melody of 1940" (made in 1937 and 1940 respectively). Eleanor Powell was the only star to appear in all three pictures and they became largely vehicles for her singing and dancing. She was given a big number "You Are My Lucky Star", but MGM lacked total confidence in her voice so her singing was dubbed by Marjorie Lane! In October of 1935, Miss Powell recorded the tune personally with the new Tommy Dorsey Orchestra and hereafter MGM never made the mistake of using anyone to cover for her vocally. (Personally, I think her singing is quite good and see little reason for the use of Miss Lane's services to begin with.) The picture was a huge box-office success and

(continued on page 24)

DIGGIN' THE GROOVES

BOB DAVENPORT

Despite the complete disregard by the major labels to keep us supplied with reissues from their huge vaults of material, the independents are still doing yeoman work in the fields of nostalgia. If you are a regular follower of DTG here in RH you will have noticed that 99% of our reviews are devoted to the product of these independents.

SUN-GRAM: Louie Prima; Hal McIntyre; Bob Crosby; Harry James; Benny Goodman and Red Nichols and Chuck Foster.....

Alan Roberts at Sunbeam Records (13821 Calvert St., Van Nuys, Ca 91401) has dipped into the archives of "live" performances for his latest release, and while some sacrifices had to be made with quality, there is no mistaking the historic value of these releases, and the music.

From the Terrace Room in Newark, N.J. back in 1944 comes our first item, featuring the late Louis Prima & His band, with Louis and the delectable Lily Ann Carol in the vocal spotlight. The humor of Louis, the great ballad work of Lily Ann, and the excitement this band always produced, make it all worth while. This is Sunbeam SB-227.

On Sunbeam SB-228 there is featured the band of Hal McIntyre from the 1943-44 period. Never as big a name band as some of the others of the period, its quality was always just as good. Vocals are handled by Johnny Turnbull, Ruth Gaylor, Gloria Van and Al Noble, with bassist Eddie Sefranski featured prominently.

Covering a wider period (1938-42) is Vol. 2 of the fine Bob Crosby organization on Sunbeam SB-229. These are mostly the driving instrumentals, with three cuts devoted to the Bob Cats. One vocal by Marian Mann, and another with Nappy Lamare & Eddie Miller teamed up on "Between 18th & 19th On Chestnut Street"

Sunbeam SB-230 is by the ageless Harry James. One side is a broadcast from Freedomland in 1962, while the other is a very interesting air shot from the Hollywood Palladium on New Year's Eve in 1953. No vocals on this one, but the drivin' Buddy Rich paces the band on the skins.

One of my favorites in this release goes back a bit further to the 1930-31 period. This is SB-157 and is called "Melotone Melodies", and features the Benny Goodman band, as well as Red Nichols & His Band. Lots of vocalists on this one, including Scappy Lambert, Paul Small, Grace Johnston, Dick Robertson, and one by Benny himself!

Because of some production difficulties, SB-321 that featured some airclocks from 1944-45 of the Chuck Foster Band, was not received in time for this review, but it will be available by the time you are reading this.

MONMOUTH-EVERGREEN: Johnny Mince

It has been some time since Monmouth-Evergreen has favored us with an "oldie", but their catalog still contains a lot of goodies. However, Bill Borden has strong ties with those big band days and he is releasing some current works by some of the greats of those days. The newest is MES/7090 featuring the Johnny Mince Quartet recorded in the summer of 1979. Besides the super clarinet work of Johnny, you can also enjoy once again Lou Stein, Bobby Haggart and Cliff Leeman.

HINDSIGHT: Stan Kenton; Harry James; Artie Shaw; Russ Morgan; Hal Kemp; George Hall; Anson Weeks

I have just finished listening to the long-awaited 9 new releases from Hindsight, and as difficult as it may be to believe, they just keep getting better! Are you ready for this?

HSR-147 is Vol. 4 in the Stan Kenton series from the 1944-45 period, and I believe it to be his better era. The great Kenton sound of old is all here with vocal assignments going to June Christy and Anita O'Day. It's a fine salute to the late Stan Kenton, who passed on Aug. 25th, 1979, and I hope it won't be the last.

Vols. 4 & 5 in the Harry James E.T.'s are to be found on HSR-141 & HSR-142 (1943-46 & 1943-54). Heard vocally are Helen Forrest, Gilda Hacon, Buddy Divito, Buddy Moreno, and Johnny Mercer on one "out" ("Sugar Blues"). The album notes are always good on these releases, but I finally found an error when Buddy Divito was given vocal credit for "Nice Work If You Can Get it" when it's really Buddy Moreno.

On HSR-139 & HSR-140 we find the beginning (I hope!) with Vol. 1 & 2 spotlighting Artie Shaw. Both LP's are from his broadcasts from the Blue Room of the Lincoln Hotel in 1938. What a super collection of hits of that time as well as standards! The bulk of the vocal assignments go to Helen Forrest, although Tony Pastor is in evidence. Also lots of the famous Shaw instrumentals, including the 6 minute version of "In the Mood".

Russ Morgan & His Band make their debut on Hindsight HSR-145, and it certainly is a welcomed addition to this ever growing catalog. This is the Morgan band of 1937-38, with Russ doing some of the vocals, aided by guitarist Jimmy Lewis, the high tenor of Mert Curtis from the sax section, Carolyn Clark, the Kullen Sisters, and society deb Gloria Whitney.

Also making his initial appearance on Hindsight (HSR-143) is Hal Kemp & His Orch. (Vol. 1, from a 1934 Lavena radio show). The band is heard on a Saxie Dowell original, Skinny Pinnis warbles in his inimitable style on 7 tunes, including a long forgotten Sam Coslow-Arthur Johnston number called "Boo Boo Boo". Saxie Powell is heard on one of his crazy novelty numbers, and then there is the wonderful Miss Deane Janis heard on 2 numbers. (I could listen to it is gal all day!) One other vocal is done by one of the Mayhew brothers, Wendell, but I really think Gus should have kept blowin' his trombone.

Yet another debut appearance is on HSR-144, with George Hall's Orch. from the 1937 period. Better known in the New York and New England area, George always played good dance music, and his popularity was

helped greatly by the somewhat raucous Dolly Dawn, who handles all the vocals on this release. His sax section was enhanced by two well known names, Jack Shilkret and George Paxton.

Finally we come to HSR-146, and one that goes back the farthest in time, to the year 1932. This features Anson Weeks & His Orch. from the Mark Hopkins Hotel "high atop Knob Hill in San Francisco". All the vocalists (Bill Moreing, Art Wilson, Karle Morgan, Jimmy Walsh, & Pete Fylling) are from the band, the one exception being Fred Scott. This is Anson's debut on Hindsight, and I certainly hope we'll have more. Perhaps Vally Heider will give us that period when Bob Crosby was getting his start as a band vocalist. (He's shown on the album cover picture, but does not appear vocally on this one). It's interesting to note while looking at this picture that a lot of future bandleaders were in this photo, including Xavier Cugat, Jimmy Walsh, Griff Williams, and, of course, Bob Crosby!

I'm quite certain that if I keep expounding on the Hindsight label I'll be accused of being on the payroll, but really it's hard NOT to rave about this wonderful catalog of electrical transcriptions that have been transferred to LP's. The engineering is superb, the album notes are very informative and complete, and the selections are welcome additions to any collection. (Many appear on records for the first time, while others that may have been recorded before are different versions). -- You might not "dig" all of these 9 new releases, but I certainly wouldn't be afraid to recommend ALL of them to the serious collector. For a catalog and further info write direct to Hindsight Records, P.O. Box 7114-R, Burbank, Ca 91510.

Remember those multi-LP sets released by the majors a few years back? Well, despite vaults full of great material that could be released we have seen nothing like it for years. Not only that, but the majors aren't even favoring us with regular single LP reissue LP's any longer it seems. But take heart! We still have those brave independents to fall back on for releases!

Frank Donovan at Golden Era (Box 126, Reseda, Ca 91335 has recently released a 5-LP boxed set called "The Big Bands Play Again" (Golden Era LP-55001) that retails for \$39.95. There are ten big bands featured on the ten sides, and these are: Tex Beneke, Hal McIntyre, Charlie Barnet, Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, Jimmy Dorsey, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, George Paxton and Georgie Auld. Not much info is given on the dates of these, but they're obviously "air checks". Most selections are instrumentals (and some fine blowin' on all of 'em!) but there is a sprinkling of vocals: Micki Merlow, Julius LeRosa and Tex with the Beneke band; Lynn Franklin with Barnet; The Clarinade! with EG; Skip Nelson and Charlie Shavers with TD; Dick Culver and Jean Cromwell with JD; Jimmy Rushing & Thelma Carpenter with Count Basie; Dan Grissom with Duke; Allen Dale with George Paxton and Patti Powers with Georgie Auld. -- Lots of good listening here and well worth the money

Also recently received from Frank Donovan's West Coast Audio Visual Corp. (address given above) are seven other new releases I'm certain quite a few of my readers will be interested in at this time:

Golden Era LP-15067: Ben Pollack Big Band. While no definite date is given I'd guess this to be from the early or mid-40s. Vocals are handled by Lynn Martin, Pat Kaye, Paula Gayle and Phil Neely. One number sung by Phil, I'm a Very Lucky Guy, has an interesting drum beat (Ben's or Graham Stevens?) playing counterpoint to Phil. Golden Era LP-15093: "Tex Beneke Salutes Glenn Miller" gives Tex a chance to pay homage to Glenn, but to also showcase his own band. Vocals are by Tex, Mary Mayo and Glen Douglas.

Golden Era LP-15082: "The Small Groups". This is an interesting release that spotlights "the band within the band", all of various sizes. Heard here are the smaller groups of Benny Goodman, Woody Herman, Artie Shaw, Charlie Barnet, Bob Crosby, Johnny Dankworth, Sonny Dunham, Harry James, Gene Krupa, Hank D'Amico, Del Simmons, and a surprise in a tasty bit by the Al Donahue group. All instrumentals, and all fine jazz. Hep B: "With No Strings", the Tex Beneke Orch. Again Tex shows us that he hasn't always played in the Miller style. Most of these are instrumental, with Tex warbling 4 of the 16 selections, and one classic early big band vocal by Evdie Gorme.

Hep 12: Buddy Rich, '47 '48, and this one's a gas. Not only some fine drumming by buddy, but we're treated to a couple of scat vocal by Ella Fitzgerald (Buddy joins her on one), Buddy singing a couple, with the rest of the vocal work going to Linda Larkin. "Milk Call". Remember this great radio show? This one starred Bing Crosby, Judy Garland, Frank Sinatra, Bob Hope, Jimmy Durante, Arthur Treacher and Jerry Colonna. Besides the ten tunes there is a lot of humorous patter between the principles.

Tandem LP-1903: "The Tommy Dorsey Story". This one's a super 2-LP set, and the inside jacket cover is loaded with some classic pictures of the band, Tommy and featured singers. Vocals are all handled by Stu Foster, Johnny Amorusa, Jack Duffy, Francis Irvin, the Sentimentalists and England's Denny Dennis. I dug it all!

A delayed item recently arrived from Alan Roberts on his Sunbeam label (Sunbeam Records, 13821 Calvert St., Van Nuys, Ca 91401) and I'd like to write a few lines about now. This one is Sunbeam HB-319, Everett Hoagland & His Orch., 1939-1940. I'm certain a lot of the readers of DTG won't be too familiar with that name, since it was, for the most part, a territory band. Everett was the "house band" at the old Rendezvous Ballroom in Balboa, Calif. long before Stan Kenton started making noises from there.

As a high school student in nearby Santa Ana I spent a lot of hours dancing to this band (as well as some hard to come by depression dimes) at the Rendezvous, and the one on this LP is of a later vintage by three or four years. The style here is much like Orville Knapp (it wasn't when I recall Everett at the old Rendezvous) and very smooth, with vocals handled by Don Burke, Homer Rhodes, and the vocal trio. If memory serves me right the entire discography of the Hoagland band is on this LP, all having been originally on the old blue label Decca's.

As of this writing I'm awaiting copies of some new things from Dozy White (Shoestring Records, P.O. Box 10208, Oakland, Ca 94610), and as news comes as received I'll be telling ya' all more about them in detail. These are SS-111, Joe Venuti, "The Mad Fiddler from Philie" and SS-113, Bobby Hackett, Henry Hudson Hotel Band, Vol. III. You can write to Dozy at the above address about these, and other fine releases in his catalog.

(continued on page 24)



When I devoted several columns to the Hit masters from W101 onward, I had an ulterior motive: I hoped by doing so to smoke out more data. As of this writing, the play has proven only moderately successful. I wish to thank Mort Savada for two contributions: he confirmed that the master numbers of Hit 7127 ("Just a Prayer Away/Wooden Shoes") were T494 and T495 and not T404 and T405 as I'd been erroneously informed. Be it understood, incidentally, that the foregoing masters are cited in the order of the titles. Mort's second addendum concerns the masters and titles (hitherto untraced) of Hit 8082; these will be cited in the appropriate place in the listing which follows. As you may have guessed by this time, I intend to list as many of the Hit 8000's series issues as have been traced and documented, in the hope that further data may be smoked out.

All issues in this series were released in albums. Most of these were 4-disc sets which sold at \$2.50 each; the odd 50¢ was charged for the "book", as was standard practice in those days. Even though a sizeable number of such albums were produced, I have seen only a very few of them, and I don't own one. This has been mostly because I've found nothing of sufficient interest to warrant buying it among the few Hit albums that have come my way. To be truthful about it, I haven't seen many I'd want to buy even if I could find them. The record-buying public of 1942-44 must have felt much the same way; how else can one account for the relative rarity of the sets?

The listing will be in catalog number order, with master numbers cited where known. To this extent, I'll be duplicating at least some part of what I've done before, but there will be some master numbers here that do not fit the regular series, and seem to be totally unrelated to it. I don't doubt that there are many more such masters; I just hope I'll get to see them! A few additional remarks seem to be in order here:

- a. Most of the data to be cited hereunder has been provided by Bill Korst and Harold Flakser.
- b. Some of the information about titles of albums and of individual records in them, provided by Harold Flakser from his various sources, is highly provisional and may need correction as much as it need additions. All such are more than welcome.

OKay, here goes:

-ALBUM H-102: "Old Favorite Songs" - Chauncey Gray, pianist with rhythm; intro.:

- 8001: (W183)"Why Do I Love You?(W186)Lover, Come Back to Me"
- 8002: (W179)"The Man I Love/(W185)Someone to Watch Over Me"
- 8003: (W182)"Lovely to Look At/(W184)Easter Parade"
- 8004: (W180)"Summertime/(W181)I Guess I'll Have to Change My Plans"

(Editorial note: I have 8003, and enjoy his rendition of "Easter Parade", which I consider the best thing in the whole set. I've heard the other records, but didn't see fit to get them, even though I've had a chance to do so.--GB)

- ALBUM H-101: title not known -- Frank Froeba, pianist w. rhythm; intro.:
- 8005: (W192)"After You've Gone/(W198)12th St. Rag"
- 8006: (W191)"Stumbling/(W195)The One I Love Belongs to Somebody Else"
- 8007: (W193)"Sweet Lorraine/(W197)Hindustan"
- 8008: (W194)"Estelle/(W196)A lover's Lullaby" and "Sun-rise Serenade"

What follows is the biggest mystery of the Hit 8000's series; records 8009 and 8010 have eluded researchers for years. The next 4-disc set, H-103, contains records 8011 thru 8014; such information as we have for it appears below. Hal Flakser has had a report of a Hit album bearing the catalog number 1; its title: "Victor Herbert Melodies", played by the Houston-Hufsmith Orchestra. It is just barely possible that this set used records 8009 and 8010, although nobody can be sure of this. IF Hit Album # 1 predated the series of sets numbered from H-101 onward, and IF it did indeed contain records 8009 and 8010, it is also faintly possible that the four masters needed for those two records fall into the presently-existing hiatus between mxs. W207 and W211. The only reservation I have about the theories aforesaid is that it would be pretty difficult to assemble anything resembling a representative sampling of Victor Herbert's works on four 10-inch record sides....So much for speculation and comment -- for the present, anyway; we return now to matters of fact. It may be worth mentioning that from here on, the catalog numbers of the records and the album numbers advance in step. It must also be admitted here that the information being presented here is pretty sketchy and incomplete. It is hoped, however, that publication of what little is available to us now will result in our getting more data, as readers check their files and/or junkpiles. The dearth of information on these records suggests that the albums were not very big sellers. It is also pretty certain that when Eli sold out to Majestic, the new owners did not keep the albums in the catalog, although a few sides may have been reissued under new catalog numbers. To resume with the numerical list:

- ALBUM H-103: "U.S.A. March Album" - Famous March Band, intro.:
- 8011: () "Anchors Aweigh/(W237)Army Air Corps"
- 8012: (E136)"America the Beautiful/()Caissons Go Rolling Along"
- 8013: () "America/()The Marines' Hymn"
- 8014: (E134)"The Star-Spangled Banner/(W255)Semper Paratus"

- ALBUM H-104: "Vienna Bon-Bons"-Strauss Concert Orchestra, Walter Selinsky, cond.; intro.:
- 8015: untraced
- 8016: untraced
- 8017: untraced
- 8018: (E122)"Southern Roses/(E125-X10)Voices of Spring"

- ALBUM H-105: "Invitation to the Waltz" - Concert Waltz Kings; intro.:
- 8019: () "Invitation to the Waltz/()The Siren's Waltz"
- 8020 thru 8022 untraced

- ALBUM H-106: "Blonde or Brunette" - Emil's Zauber Concert Orchestra, Emil Herzer, cond.(Flakser has seen this group referred to also as "Emil's Zauber Orchestra"); intro.:
- 8023 and 8024 untraced
- 8025: (E121)"Charming/(E127)Golden Showers"
- 8026: () "I Love You/()Dolores"

- ALBUM H-107: "Stephen Foster Songs" - Juanita Hall Choir; intro.:
- 8027: () "Camptown Races/()Beautiful Dreamer"
- 8028: () "Old Folks at Home/()My Old Kentucky Home"
- 8029: () "Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming/()Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair"
- 8030: () "Oh Susanna/ ---?---"

(N.B.: title traced via LP reissue. Eighth side still unknown, as it was not included on the LP)

(Note: If the Choir sang unaccompanied on these records as they did on the records of album H-111, listed below, its masters may well have been recorded during the "scab-session" period, as were those of H-111; those were listed as mxs. M293 thru M300.)

- ALBUM H-108: "On Wings of Song" - Julius Weber Groups; intro.:
- 8031: () "Drink to Me Only With Thine Eyes/()On Wings of Song"
- 8032: untraced
- 8033: () "Home Sweet Home/()title doubtful; see below
- 8034: () "All Through the Night/()Song Without Words"

(Note: According to Hal Flakser, the reverse side of 8033 may be either "Cradle Song", "Lullaby" or a medley of both. In my own opinion, for what that's worth, his informant may have been referring to the same piece -- Brahms' "Lullaby" -- as it is known by both titles. -- GB)

TOMORROW'S ARTISTS TODAY!

Modern Eyes-zing Bob Porter

****List of SIGNATURE Masters****
Research! Research!....
Here we go again! BOB PORTER has dug up another fine masters listing -- and it has intrigue written all over. Although no catalog numbers are given, the master numbers will certainly invite research into what was issued -- and what may have shown up on other company logos. The other Bob, BOB THIELE, was one heck of a researcher and a jazz magazine publisher -- and of course the Prez. of Signature which enjoyed heavy popularity in the 1940s. Perhaps he could clarify the alphabetic prefixes, etc. Our readers, of course, are invited to get into the fray. /LK

The advent of SIGNATURE in the popular record field ushers in a new standard of leadership... inspired by a unique insight into the public taste... and backed by a new, modern and capacious plant geared to the quantity production of quality records. The demonstrated ability to pick tomorrow's musical winners... today... is just as important as the capacity to turn out the records. Together, they give you SIGNATURE... The Record Of Tomorrow... Today!

	TITLE	ARTIST		TITLE	ARTIST		TITLE	ARTIST
1	BE MY LOVE	Jerry Keller	H-51	VANITY	Roger Coleman	F-1006	BLACK AND BLUE	Net Jaffe
2	IF	Jerry Keller	H-52	IN THE COOL COOL COOL OF T'Z EVENING	Betty Cloney	F-1007	ZONKY	Net Jaffe
3	MY HEART CRIES FOR YOU	Ben Abbott & Jerry Keller	H-53	DETOUR	Betty Cloney	S-1	SKYSRAPER	Joe Flip Phillips
4	A PEET-A KISS, A PEET-A KISS	Ben Abbott & Jerry Keller	H-54	WONDER WH	Betty Cloney	S-2	PAPILLONA	Joe Flip Phillips
5	THE RAVING KING	Jerry Keller	T1905	VOGUE	Coleman Hawkins	S-3	A MELODY FROM THE SKY	Joe Flip Phillips
6	JONI & MARSHA	Ben Abbott & Jerry Keller	1906	HOW DEEP IS THE OCEAN	Coleman Hawkins	S-4	LET ME CALL YOU SWEETHEART	Trummy Young
7	ZING ZING, ZOOM ZOOM	Jerry Keller	1907	HAWKIN'S BARRELHOUSE	Coleman Hawkins	S-5	LANE BRAIN	Trummy Young
8	ADA DABA HONETHOON	Ben Abbott & Jerry Keller	1908	STUMPY	Coleman Hawkins	S-6	KRULL'S BOUNCE	Trummy Young
9	SO LONG	Ben Abbott	1909	SQUEEZE ME	Yank Lawson	S-7	WANG WANG BLUES	Yank Lawson
10	YOU'RE JUST IN LOVE	Ben Abbott & Jerry Keller	1911	TOO MANY TIMES	Yank Lawson	S-8	STUNGLING	Yank Lawson
11	MOCKIN' BIRD HILL	Ben Abbott	1912	THE STRIKE OF ARABY	Yank Lawson	S-9	THAT'S A PLENTY	Yank Lawson
12	ON WHAT A PAGE	Jerry Keller	1913	OLD FASHIONED LOVE	James P. Johnson	S-16	1-2-3-4, JUMP	Joe Flip Phillips
13	ON MOONLIGHT BAY	Ray Bloch & Art Gentry	1914	BLUESBERRY PRIME	James P. Johnson	T-19001	BLUES CHANGES	Coleman Hawkins
14	WHEN YOU & I WERE YOUNG MAGGIE BLUES	Ray Bloch & Art Gentry	1915	BLUES FOR PATS	James P. Johnson	T-19002	THESE POLISH THINGS	Coleman Hawkins
15	HOW HIGH THE MOON	Dorothy Loudon	1916	OVER THE BARS	James P. Johnson	T-19003	I GOT RHYTHM	Dicky Wells
16	WORLD I LOVE YOU	Dorothy Loudon	1917	LOVER COME BACK TO ME	Coleman Hawkins	T-19004	I'M PER IT TOO	Dicky Wells
17	ON TOP OF OLD SHOOTY	Jeffrey Clay	1918	INDIANA	Coleman Hawkins	T-19005	THE MAN I LOVE	Coleman Hawkins
18	IT IS NO SECRET	Jeffrey Clay	1919	HELLO BABE	Dicky Wells	T-19006	SWEET LOVRINE	Coleman Hawkins
19	HOT CANARY	Henry Whitman	1920	LINGER AWHILE	Dicky Wells	CAL-101	SNAKE PIT	Leo Watson
20	STAGGATED CLOCK	Bernie Leighton	1921	CRABBY RHYTHM	Coleman Hawkins	CAL-102	JINGLE BELLS	Leo Watson
21	RHUMBA BOOGIE	Art Gentry	1922	GET HAPPY	Coleman Hawkins	LS-1945-2	SHRIMP	Shorty Sherock
22	BEAUTIFUL BROWN EYES	Eddie O'Connor	1923	TEA FOR TWO	Barney Bigard	LS-1945-4	THE WILLIES	Shorty Sherock
23	THERES BEEN A CHANGE IN ME	Art Gentry	1924	STEPS STEPS UP	Barney Bigard	HC-1	CINDERELLA	Leon Jamney
24	I LOVE YOU A THOUSAND WAYS	Eddie O'Connor	1925	STEPS STEPS DOWN	Barney Bigard	HC-2	THE THREE BEARS	Leon Jamney
25	SHOTGUN BOOGIE	Art Gentry	1926	MOONLUN	Barney Bigard	HC-3	THE THREE LITTLE PIGS	Leon Jamney
26	COLD, COLD, HEART	Eddie O'Connor	1945-1	MEANDERING	Shorty Sherock	HC-4	PETER RABBIT	Leon Jamney
27	GOLDEN ROCKS	Art Gentry	1945-3	IT'S THE TALK OF THE TOWN	Shorty Sherock	HC-5	THREE KITTENS	Leon Jamney
28	POISON LOVE	Eddie O'Connor	1950	THESE POLISH THINGS REMIND ME OF YOU	Shorty Sherock	HC-6	MOTHER HUBBARD	Leon Jamney
29	UNLESS	Art Gentry	1951	YOU CAN DEPEND ON ME	Berlie Fields	HC-7	LITTLE BOY BLUE	Leon Jamney
30	THE LOVELIEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR	Jimmy Saunders	1952	BLUES IN M' MIND	Berlie Fields	HC-8	TOMMY TUCKER	Leon Jamney
31	ROSE, ROSE, I LOVE YOU	Jimmy Saunders	RMT-1	HOW HIGH THE MOON	Eddie Heywood	HC-9	OLD KING COLE	Leon Jamney
32	YERBEE	Jimmy Saunders	RMT-2	SARCASTIC LARK	Eddie Heywood	HC-10	HURRY DUMPTY	Leon Jamney
33	PRETTY EYES BAHY	Art Gentry & Judy Lynn	RMT-3	THEN THERE EYES	Eddie Heywood	HC-11	LITTLE MISS MUFFET	Leon Jamney
34	YOU YOUNG	Judy Lynn	RMT-4	FENTHOUSE SUPREMACY	Eddie Heywood	HC-12	ULLY DUCKLING	Leon Jamney
35	MISER & MISSISSIPPI	Art Gentry & Judy Lynn	RMT-5	BOB'S BELIEF	Joe Flip Phillips	HC-13	LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD	Leon Jamney
36	I LIKE THE WIDE OPEN SPACES	Judy Lynn	RMT-6	SWEET & LOVELY	Joe Flip Phillips	HC-14	LITTLE JACK HUNTER	Leon Jamney
37	COOK ON A MY HOUSE	Judy Lynn	BOB-1	FLAMINGO	Eddie Heywood	HC-15	LITTLE RED FIRE ENGINE	Leon Jamney
38	I WISH I HAD NEVER SEEN SUNSHINE	Judy Lynn	BOB-2	ON THE SUNNY SIDE OF THE STREET	Eddie Heywood	BOB-16	THE SOUND EFFECTS BUT	Yank Lawson
39	SWEET VIOLETS	Judy Lynn	BOB-3	TIPS ON MY HANDS	Eddie Heywood	T1901	SQUEEZE ME	Yank Lawson
40	THESE'S A BIG BLUE CLOUD	Art Gentry	BOB-4	NIGHT & DAY	Eddie Heywood	T1902	THAT'S A PLENTY	Yank Lawson
41	MY TRULY, TRUELY PAIR	Judy Lynn	BOB-5	LADY BE GOOD	Yank Lawson	T1903	BLUES	Yank Lawson
42	I'M IN LOVE AGAIN	Judy Lynn	BOB-6	NOTWORTHY BLUES	Yank Lawson	T1904	OLD FASHIONED LOVE	Yank Lawson
43	SHANDRAI	Judy Lynn	BOB-7	PLAININ' THE BLUES	Dave Brown	12SR100	LADY BE GOOD	Yank Lawson
44	WHAT IS A BOY	Judy Lynn	BOB-8	SOME FUNNY THAT WAY	Dave Brown	12SR101	DAVENPORT BLUES	Yank Lawson
45	JOSEPHINE	Harry, by Ken Roberts	RT-101	SOAKY BOY	Leo Watson			
46	RECAPS OF YOU	Art Reynen	RT-102	TIGHT & GAY	Leo Watson			
47	I GET IDEAS	Roger Coleman	F-1000	MY FATE IS IN YOUR HANDS	Earl Hines			
48	LONGING FOR YOU	Roger Coleman	F-1001	I'VE GOT A FEELING I'M FALLING	Earl Hines			
49	WHILE YOU DANCED, DANCED, DANCED	Betty Cloney	F-1002	SQUEEZE ME	Earl Hines			
50	SWEETHEART OF YESTERDAY	Roger Coleman	F-1003	HOW CAN YOU FACE ME	Net Jaffe			
			F-1004	KEEPIN' OUT OF MISCHIEF NOW	Net Jaffe			
			F-1005					

(to be continued)



Signature Recording Corporation... Adv. 227, 228, 229, 230
Rec 286, 294
Signature was originally organized in 1942 by Bob Thiele and for three years specialized in jazz records only. In 1946 a vastly larger, different company developed, one with its own complete plant in New York City and national distribution thru the Immense General Electric Supply Corporation. Signature has been in the big-time disk picture only a short time but gives every sign of swelling out nicely. Artists include Ray Bloch, Johnny Bothwell, Harry Cool, Monica Lewis, Hazel Scott, Will Bradley, Yank Lawson, Victor Jory, Bobby Doyle and others.
Plans for 1947 call for large-scale advertising campaigns, both to the trade and to consumers, and the construction of an additional plant. Firm topplers are Robert Thiele, prexy; George Jaycox, v.p. in charge of engineering and manufacturing; Neil MacDonal, advertising manager and art director, and Gerald Ross, sales promotion manager. Offices at 601 West 66th St., New York 1, New York.
The above from the Billboard 1946-47 Encyclopedia of Music.
Note: On the lower left hand corner, the almost obliterated 'signature' is of prexy Bob Thiele..



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Arlington, Texas 76019

THE BEECHAM CELEBRATION PART ONE

The one-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Sir Thomas Beecham, who was born in the midlands of England on April 29, 1879, has produced an unusual effect. The anniversary was scarcely noticed in the United States, but in England a large quantity of Beecham recordings have been reissued. Beecham's recording career spanned fifty years from the 1910 series he did with the Beecham Symphony Orchestra for Columbia to the early days of stereo. What is even more unusual about the reissues in England is that the World eight-record set allows us to hear some of Beecham's earliest recorded performances. This World-EMI set is among the more than thirty LPs by Beecham that were issued in a three-month period. The lion's share of Sir Thomas Beecham's immense recorded output was made for EMI and its predecessors, but important recordings were also done for RCA and American Columbia (CBS). Beecham's last recording of the Handel *Messiah*, once available on a lavish boxed issue for Red Seal, has been reissued on RCA Gold Seal and is available both here and in Great Britain. A few years ago CBS reissued a quantity of pre-stereo items, including the last six symphonies of Mozart as well as important recordings of Delius and Berlioz, but EMI in the U. S. has not, so far, chosen to commemorate the event of Beecham's centenary. To be fair to EMI (U. S.), several recordings deleted in Europe years ago have remained in print over here either on Angel or on Seraphim reissues. More recently, EMI has granted reissue rights to some material to U. S. Turnabout. However, except for the Turnabout material, the recordings by Beecham available in the United States are post-World War II, and it's my belief that the later recordings generally are inferior to the earlier ones. The recent British reissues give us a better picture of Beecham's recording career as a whole.

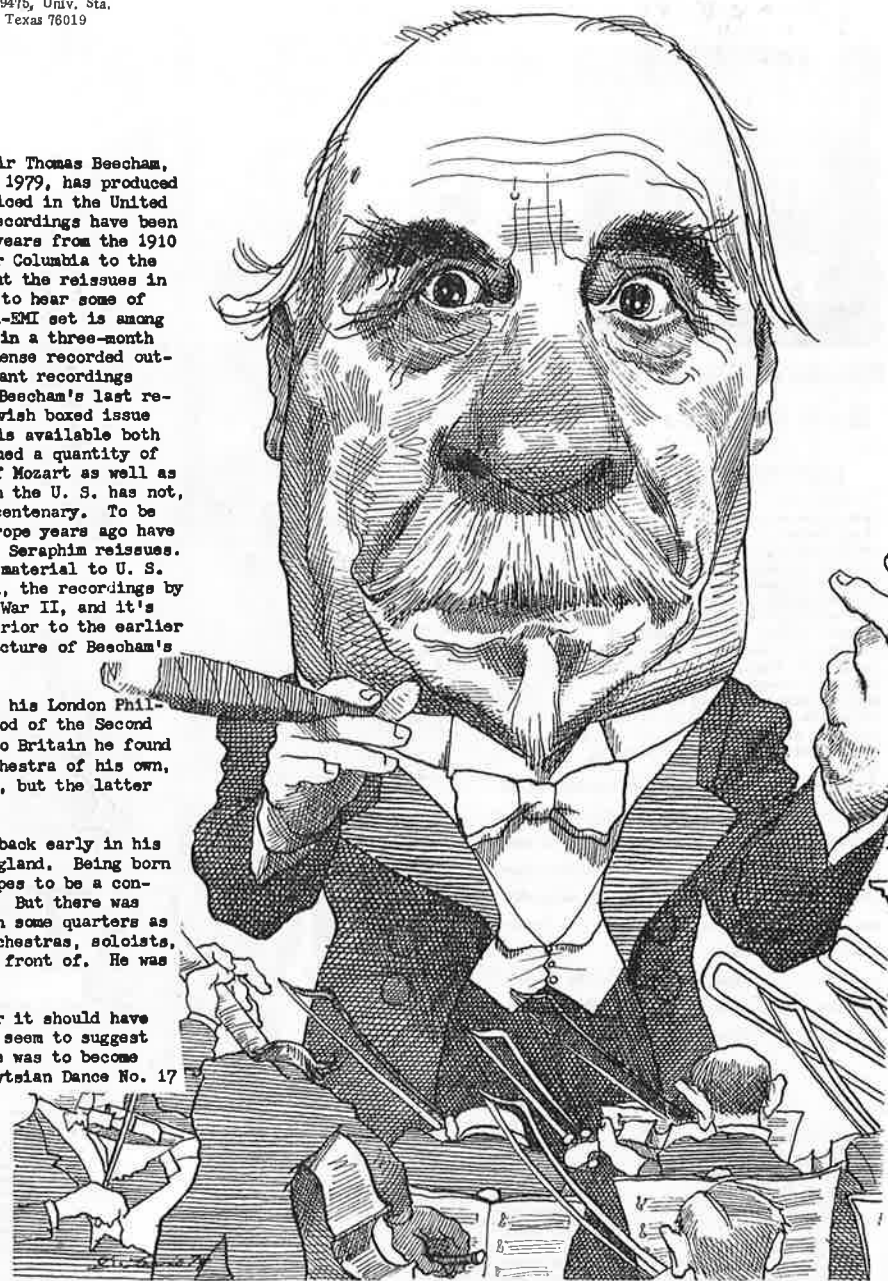
I think Beecham was at his best in the 1930s with his London Philharmonic recordings. He spent a good deal of the period of the Second World War in the United States, and when he returned to Britain he found he no longer had control over the LPO. Wanting an orchestra of his own, Beecham reconstituted the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, but the latter was never the equal of the pre-war LPO.

Sir Thomas Beecham had to overcome a decided drawback early in his career; he was the son of one of the richest men in England. Being born rich certainly has compensations, especially if one hopes to be a conductor and can rely on the family hiring an orchestra. But there was also a disadvantage. For years Beecham was regarded in some quarters as a rich dilettante indulged by his father who hired orchestras, soloists, and opera companies for young Tommy to wave a stick in front of. He was not taken seriously by many of the critics.

That notion held on among a few critics long after it should have been dispelled. The recorded evidence, however, does seem to suggest that in his early days Beecham was not the conductor he was to become later. I have a c. 1910 recording of the Borodin *Polovtsian Dance* No. 17



(abridged) played (if that's the word) by the Beecham Symphony Orchestra. Sir Thomas' own name being absent, one might suspect him of not wanting his own name to appear on the label. The recording is a musical demolition derby, but it was conducted by Sir Thomas himself. The record contains more clams than a Maine chowder; the derby is won by the first horn, who managed the largest number of wrong notes, but he had competition all the way. In later years, Sir Thomas never would have tolerated that kind of slipshod playing in his orchestra, certainly never on record, and in the early years of the electrical era he recorded the same piece again, but this time complete. The early electrical was done with the London Symphony Orchestra, an orchestra Sir Thomas seldom



SIR THOMAS BEECHAM, BART.

recorded with, and the performance is more than respectable. Exactly when it was recorded I don't know, but the matrix prefixes (WAX) indicate a date before 1931 when English Columbia abandoned the Western Electric system of electrical recording in favor of its own (CA/CAX prefixes). Tommy Beecham recorded the work yet again in 1933, this time with the LPO, a recording that now is a part of the eight-LP World set.

There has been some question, in the past, as to whether or not Beecham actually conducted those early Beecham Symphony Orchestra recordings since his name does not appear on the labels. It now appears that he conducted all of them. With financial help from his family, Tommy Beecham began his recording career in 1910 with more-or-less private orchestras. He recorded with the Beecham Opera Company as early as 1912; undoubtedly some of the Beecham Symphony members were part of the Beecham Opera Company as well. He continued to make records, usually with the LSO, in the 1920s, but a good deal of his time was spent in conducting and producing opera. He also began making guest appearances in the U. S. then as well as having a stint with the Hallé Orchestra of Manchester.

(to be continued)

Music-KLEE Speaking! Joe Klee

Joe H. Klee Apt. S 804
555-8 Main Street, Roosevelt Island
New York, New York 10044

FROM THE OPERA HOUSE No. 2 "Once upon a time...FREDERICA VON STADE....."

Once upon a time, don't most stories begin that way even in Grand Opera? Once upon a time...a long time ago (1969 it was)...the Prince of the Kingdom (RUDOLF BING, manager of the Metropolitan Opera) decided to hold a gala ball (the Metropolitan Opera Auditions) to assess the desirability of those candidates for the position of princess (opera singer). A sweet young thing (well she was ten years younger than she is today anyhow) from a far off kingdom (New Jersey) slipped away from her stepmother and ugly sisters to attend (compete) at the ball (audition). Before the evening was over the Prince (Rudolf Bing) was walking around with a glass slipper looking for Cinderella (FREDERICA VON STADE) with a proposal (contract) of marriage (to sing at his Metropolitan Opera House). She said I do and they all lived happily ever after (well a couple of years at least 'til she went looking for new Princes to conquer). Well she did come back and visit the Prince (1973, as Rosina in "The Barber Of Seville") and she's due back again next year (Rosina in "The Barber" again)...but she's a grown up lady now with a husband and a child and numerous operatic successes in Paris, Glyndebourne and Salzburg to her credit).

It's been a while since there's been a mezzo soprano as an operatic superstar. Despite the efforts of GIULIETTA SIMIONATO and TERESA BERGANZA the public has just taken more comfortably to the adulation of tenors and sopranos than they have mezzos. For a while it looked like MARILYN HORNE might attain superstardom but the public kept linking her toe inseparably with JOAN SUTHERLAND to single her out for honors. Maybe it's the old absence makes the heart grow fonder bit but it seems like the Met subscribers are awaiting this latest appearance of Von Stade's comet like the promised manna from heaven...a feeling fed by liberal helpings of Von Stade's recorded output including her two latest for CBS Columbia, Massenet's "Cendrillon" and Humperdink's "Hansel und Gretel." Both are operatic versions of famous Grimm's "fairy tales", a misnomer as pointed out in Barrymore Laurence Scherer's informative and interesting essay in the booklet which comes with the "Hansel und Gretel" set. I cannot say too much about this essay and I would consider it required reading for anyone who desires an insight, not only to "Hansel und Gretel" but to any opera based on folk legend...including "the Ring of the Niebelungen".

While Humperdink's "Hansel und Gretel" is not the opera household word that "Carmen" or "Butterfly" are it is an opera which is in the repertoire of most opera companies and it is frequently offered around Christmas time (with an early curtain so youngsters can be introduced to Grand Opera) and it is certainly more familiar than Massenet's "Cendrillon" which, like much of Massenet's work, has been sadly neglected. There was a time when Massenet was in vogue and his "Manon," "Werther" and "Herodiade" could be heard frequently at the best opera houses. Today it requires the presence of a superstar like Sutherland to convince the Met to mount his "Esclarmonde" and the brilliance of a superstar like Von Staade to induce a major record company into issuing the first available complete recording of "Cendrillon" rather than another "Madama Butterfly". I will hand it to the Met that they have restored Massenet's "Werther" to the repertoire but if the Met's new production plans include "Cendrillon" I haven't heard about it. For some reason or other Rossini's opera based on the Cinderella legend "La Cenerentola" is more popular with today's audiences. I don't know why? Massenet's opera contains as much, if not more, beautiful music as Rossini's and also Rossini robs the story of all its mystical quality. Even the fairy godmother is missing.. Not so with Massenet. He capitalizes on the fantasy and the magical aspects of the story. He also reminds us of his past successes with elements in "Cendrillon" which have parallel images in "Manon". When Cendrillon laments "Adieu, mes souvenirs de joie" it doesn't take a Doctorate in musicology to be reminded of Manon's "Adieu, notre petite table."

While Frederica Von Stade gets top billing on both these albums a lot of the success is due to others in the cast. The marvelous RUTH WELTING sings both the Fairy Godmother in "Cendrillon" and the Deth Fairy in "Hansel und Gretel". ILEANA CORTUBAS, so impressive as Gilda in "Rigoletto" at the Met a few seasons back, sings Gretel to Von Staade's Hansel and even the relatively unimportant role of the Sandman is sung by a magnificent artist, KIRI TE KANAWA. The cast is not quite as stellar for "Cendrillon" but Massenet's masterpiece is an opera which pretty much rises or falls on the strengths or weaknesses of the title character. "Hansel und Gretel" is an ensemble work.

The conducting of JULIUS RUDEL in "Cendrillon" is just right and perfect. Only he and RICHARD BONYNGE seem able to really get to the heart of French opera-thank heavens we were spared another erratic performance by GEORGE PRETRES. I would not have expected JOHN PRITCHARD with his reputation as a Mozart conductor to be at all in sympathy with Humperdink's Wagnerian tendencies. Yet he filled the bill perfectly with just the right touch of the dramatic yet light enough not to splinter the magical mystery of the story.

My only negative feelings about these albums...and both are debatable and neither is critical enough to spoil what is excellent here...are the use of a tenor to sing the role of Prince Charming in "Cendrillon" where Massenet specified a female singer for the role...and that this recording of "Hansel und Gretel" would be an ideal introduction to grand opera for children had it been sung in English rather than German. I normally abhor translations but somehow I can't imagine a four year old sophisticated enough to sit through this recording as wonderful as it is otherwise without understanding the language.

So here is Frederica Von Stade about to make her second re-appearance at the Metropolitan Opera House being recorded with regularity (and not just by Columbia but on other labels as well). By the time she gets here people will be ready for her. Audiences will be prepared to hear something exceptional and I'm sure that the new superstar of the Met won't let them down.

Yesterday! A collage from the fifth revised edition (1919) of the Victrola Book of the Opera by Samuel Holland Rous.

A Salute to RCA-VICTOR!!
.... Yesterday's Great Performances!
.... Today's Great History!!



JOHN BING AS PRINCE



CHALISTAPPE AS ROSIE



HELENA AS ROSINA



CARLOS AS RHAMSES



FROM CARLOS



JOHN BING AS PRINCE



ELEMENT AS DAN UERSTU



ALDA AS MICELA



FROM THEATRE



BESTIM AS UERSTU



BAR BING AS THE DETECTIVE



VIA AS ELVIRA (OPERA COMIQUE)



GILBERT AS SARTREZ



RECHERCHER-HEINE AS WART

THE LADY WITH THE TAP - ELEANOR POWELL (cont'd)

Eleanor Powell returned to New York for anything but a rest. She was featured heavily on radio on Socony's "Flying Red Horse Tavern" and on the "Shell Chateau". This brings us to a rather interesting aside and also part of the basic reason for this article. By today's jaded standards, tap dancing on radio or records is a strange concept. Only a few really exciting dancers were able to bring alive their craft in these media. Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, Fred Astaire, and Eleanor Powell were the only stage and screen personalities able to accomplish this. (Notably Miss Powell was the only woman to do this!)

Now back in New York, once again Broadway called. This time it was in the guise of the Messers. Shubert. Vincente Minnelli (father of Lisa) at 28 years of age was given his first solo production "At Home Abroad". It was a musical around-the-world cruise made up of vignettes at various geographical points of interest. Considering the bubbling caldron of world affairs it was a very happy trip. The world of Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, Hirohito, and "Peace in our time" were happily ignored. The show starred Beatrice Lillie, Ethel Waters, Herb Williams, and Eleanor Powell. It boasted a delightful score by Dietz and Schwartz. In it Miss Powell played a stuffy Britisher discussing gentlemanly foibles in "That's Not Cricket". At another port she was a spy delivering top secret messages to her cohorts through Morse-code tap dancing in "The Lady with the Tap". She was also featured in a production number (complete with marionettes!) discussing an overview of the trip called "What a Wonderful World". Later, she and Ethel Waters discussed the delights of a young man getting all dolled up to see his favorite girl in "Got a Bran' New Suit".

Eleanor Powell, at this time, held the rare and perhaps unduplicated distinction of having her name appear simultaneously on two marquees directly opposite one another on Broadway. (One was for "At Home Abroad" and across the street was "Broadway Melody of 1936") After three months appearing in the show, making the constant radio appearances, and getting another call from Hollywood to do "Born to Dance", it is small wonder that she collapsed from sheer exhaustion from overwork.

After several weeks rest, she was back on her feet and on to Hollywood again. More on that next issue.

Any comments, questions, information, etc. to:
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Bergenfield, New Jersey 07621

"BLACK PATTI" on the American Theatrical Stage

The year 1916 was the last season for "Black Patti Troubadours". It was reported that the Troubadours started the season in Chicago or in Indianapolis and Pittsburgh but during this season the "Black Patti and the Troubadours" disbanded. Mme. Jones was emotionally upset about this sudden announcement that the company was forced to break up, and the performers and chorus members were partially paid to aid them to return to the city. Black Patti's Troubadours were now non-existent after nineteen seasons on the stage.

Their work in pioneer trail blazing, with their leader Madame Jones, was now a living legend in the history of the theatrical stage. While she was still living in Providence, R.I., memories of her by the Negro generation who heard her and were proud of her, remembered, when the Chicago Record Company was formed, her name was selected for the new phonograph label "Black Patti" in her honor. Previously the Black Swan record named after Elizabeth Taylor Greenfield by the Pace Phonograph Corporation of New York on January 1921 was a tribute to another of the famous of her race to rise to great heights in the early 1800s on the American concert stage.

Elizabeth Taylor Greenfield, known as the "Black Swan", born in Natchez, Mississippi in 1809, appeared on the American concert stage. She possessed a contralto voice of incomparable range.

She was on concert throughout major cities of America and went to England, gave a command performance for Queen Victoria at Buckingham Palace May 4, 1854, received a favorable reputation abroad. Returning to America, she went into semi-retirement as a vocal teacher. She died on March 31, 1876. (22)

An interesting story is the "Black Swan" record started when Harry H. Pace left the Pace & Handy Music Company to begin the "Black Swan" recording venture. This company formed in Jan. 1921, later in May 17th 1924 merged with the Paramount (New York Recording Laboratories). They recorded records primarily for blacks. This was in remembrance of a Negro singer who also carried the torch of progress for those to follow. The Black Swan record had a small design of a black swan on the label - when the Black Patti record was produced in 1927 it had a beautifully designed peacock with a feather spread as a major part of the label.

(to be continued)

(22) James Weldon Johnson - Black Manhattan (1939)

A R association for recorded sound collections

S C (contact Les Waffan, exec. sec., A.R.S.C., P.O. box 1643, Manassas Va 22110 (202) 593-3267)....

The Association for Recorded Sound Collections (ARSC) has announced that its 14th Annual Convention will be held in Ottawa, May 8-10, 1980. This year's meeting is being hosted by the National Library and Public Archives of Canada, and will be held at their facility.

Franz Falkenburg (Pseud. of Ernest L. Stevens), piano -

10/29/24 10056

F,G,H

Babbling brook. Remake of 9/11/24 session. Passed by Walsh. There are test pressings at the Edison National Historic Site with file numbers: Take F ED1570; Take H ED1570.

10/30/24 10045

F,G,H

Charming waltzes. Remake of 7/16/24 session. Passed by Walsh. There are test pressings of Takes F, G & H at the Edison National Historic Site with file numbers ED1559; ED1559 & ED1560

Franz Falkenburg

ISSUE INFORMATION

Discs

51065 8716/ 8722
51124 8711/ 8711
51301 8749/ 10008
51444 10055/ 10046
51485/ 10037/ 10039
51505 10026/ 10035

Cylinder recordings

4758 dubbed from disc matrix 8714

***** Next... another Stevens pseudonym!
----- HARRY OSBORNE and more!! *****

DIGGIN' THE GROOVES . . . with bob davenport

BIG NEWS BULLETIN : : : ---- I recently had a call from RCA in New York, and part of the mystery of the Bluebird Series has been solved. Sorry I can't give you more details as of now (but keep watching this column for further developments!) regarding future plans. But, it seems there was a release in January of two new items, neither of which have found their way here yet so I'll just have to give you minute details! One of these is "The Complete Glenn Miller, Vol. 5" (AXM2-5565) while the other is "The Complete Tommy Dorsey, Vol. 4 (AXM2-5564).

Well, guys and gals, it's time for me to wrap things

up here for this time. Will close with happy hunting, and good listening. For any further details on anything you read about here in D.T.G.'s, write to me at 10661 Old Orchard Hwy., Holderness, Ct 05448. -- So long for now.



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